

Testimony March 3, 2015 5pm Appropriations Secondary Education Subcommittee

Senator Bye, Representative Walker, Senator Slossberg, Representative Fleischmann, and Members of the Secondary Education Subcommittee:

As you may have heard, Youth Service Bureaus have taken a significant hit in the Governors' budget this year. Our entire Enhancement Grant has been eliminated a total of \$620,000 that was dispersed across 102 Youth Service Bureaus. Our SDE statewide grant of \$2,989,268 was reduced by \$700,000. This too, is allocated across 102 YSBs. **Sixty-five** percent of the funds that support YSBs are from the local municipalities' both direct (57 %) and in-kind (8 %) contributions, as they are designed to be community partnerships. YSBs report combined available funding of \$29,709,937, which we have leveraged beyond the basic state grants. This is a huge "Bang for the Buck"! Reducing our very small basic grant reduces our capacity to leverage other monies.

In the last five years, the YSBs have increased their services in many areas. Most notable is a doubling of the number served in after-school programs and a 134 percent increase in the number served in positive youth development programs. A total of 40,483 youth who each received 20 or more hours of services were served last year, many individuals often received multiple services, and a significant amount received services as part of a diversion from the juvenile justice system.

In addition to the monetary cuts, we were removed from the Department of Education and placed under Department of Children and Families, where we were, unsuccessfully, until 1994. While under the Department of Education, we were considered part of the aid to municipality package. Now we are not. So when, the Governor says there were no cuts to municipalities that is not quite the case. Clearly, everyone has concerns about budget cuts. I think you know the work we do here in Norwich and the difficulties we face.

As an advisory board member to the Norwich Youth and Family Service Bureau, coordinator for Southeastern Regional Action Council, and a multi-generational resident of Norwich CT, I urge to restore all funding to the YSB's and maintain the current operating structure that has been amazingly successful over the past few years.

Sincerely,

Angela Rae Duhaime  
NYFS Advisory Board  
Southeastern Regional Action Council